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The Commanding General
FAR EAST AIR FORCES

19 August 1954

Dear Nate,

On 14, 15, and 16 August I was the guest of the Chinese Air Force in Formosa. This visit was timed so that our party would arrive on Chinese Air Force Day, 14 August, and, as a result, we were able to participate in some of the ceremonies marking that occasion and to convey your personal message to the Chinese Air Force Chief General Wang Shu-ming.

The festivities in connection with Chinese Air Force Day were somewhat overshadowed by the death of General Kwei who had been serving in a position corresponding to that of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States' establishment. He died most unexpectedly on Friday and his funeral was held on Sunday. General Wang rearranged our plans so that I was able to take our visiting officers to present a wreath and pay our respects during the time that the body was lying in state.

In company with General Wang and others, our party visited two air bases. One of these was Tainan in southwest Formosa where the first of the jet fighter bomber units has been trained. The other base is just west of Taipei and is called Taoyuan. This newly completed base has a fighter-bomber group and a reconnaissance group, both of which are waiting for conversion to jet aircraft. These two fields have recently been rebuilt with concrete to provide 8,000 foot runways, and much other airfield construction work is going on elsewhere on the island.

The F-84 operation at Tainan is especially impressive. The unit's flying, its care of personnel equipment, its training standards, and its gunnery and bombing compare favorably with United States' standards. In addition the maintenance operation which has been set up there is as good as I have ever seen anywhere.

At Taoyuan, the principal aircraft is the F-47, and the Chinese are also doing well with these airplanes. The first of the T-33s and RT-33s for conversion to jets have arrived, and a most competent Chinese commander is busily engaged in transitioning his pilots.

I am at a loss to understand why the United States Air Force is buying RT-33s for the Chinese. While the airplane has some increase in radius of action over the RF-80, high speed and performance at altitude are strictly marginal, making the RT-33 entirely unsuited for single-plane employment in the face of the MIG opposition which the Chinese Air Force constantly encounters in its flights along the

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Chinese Mainland. As a matter of fact, a pilot flying an RF-33 in the face of MIG-15 opposition probably is worse off than one flying an RF-51. This situation only highlights the lack of recon aircraft throughout the Air Force. You will recall perhaps that in FEAF we are solving this shortage through conversion of F-86F aircraft to a photographic model.

Speaking generally and based solely upon my observations of the work being carried on at these two stations, I would say that the Chinese Air Force is operating at a high state of effectiveness; that it is combat capable at the present time within the limits of the equipment provided for it; that the conversion to jet aircraft presents no problem; and that the morale of the Chinese Air Force personnel is high. The Chinese Air Force has succeeded in eliminating the "face" troubles that used to prevent the senior personnel from acquiring experience, yet, at the same time, retain the respect of their juniors. There is a fine attitude in all echelons which manifests itself in the improving capability of the Chinese Air Force to carry out instrument training and night and bad weather operations. Lastly, General "Tiger" Wang is a fine commander who gets things done.

Our party also visited the so-called Joint Operations Center near Taipei. Actually this establishment is more nearly an air Defense operations center than a Joint Operations Center. There is no real participation in the Joint Operations Center by the commanders of the Army and the Navy, and, in fact, under present circumstances, with China neither at war nor at peace, it seems unlikely that any real JCC operations can or should be carried out. In actual practice the Ministry of National Defense actually operates as an Imperial General Staff, and even minor decisions are referred to that level lest the commitment of Chinese Nationalist Forces overstep the bounds under which China must operate its military services.

The Generalissimo had scheduled a dinner for our party for Sunday night, but due to General Kwei's death this was cancelled. We did, however, have an opportunity to visit him and I must say that our treatment at his hands was most cordial. He showed a genuine interest in Air Force affairs and an intimate knowledge of the activities of the Chinese Air Force. He repeatedly urged that I return to Formosa whenever possible - a point to which he attached such importance that I feel it bears repetition.

My own schedule and my responsibilities in FEAF are such that I made no commitments regarding further visits, but I do feel there is much FEAF can do to assist the Chinese Air Force in continuing its progress. For example, there are several logistics matters which require attention, and I will take appropriate steps here at FEAF to correct the deficiencies insofar as we are able. General Wang

and his staff could also learn a great deal through visits in Japan, Okinawa and Korea, and I have issued an invitation to them which I am sure they will accept if their government will permit.

Insofar as USAF personnel on Formosa are concerned, my general impression was excellent. Colonel Vance and Colonel Rosebush at MAAG, Colonel Kreider, the Air Attache, and Colonel Morehead at Tainan, and Colonel Wise at Taoyuan seemed most capable. In fact, as a group, the USAF officers and men appeared outstanding. They showed great competence in handling both their social and their official duties, and General Chase had only praise for them. It is obvious that someone has done a splendid job in selecting the officers and men who comprise the MAAG. You can take pride in the results which are being obtained within the Chinese Air Force.

Hope your trip to Hawaii was as pleasant as ours in Formosa the same weekend. Many thanks for your message regarding my meeting you at Hickam.

Regards.

/s/

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